



HEANOR GATE SCIENCE COLLEGE

“Develop all learners to achieve their full potential”
“Create a culture of aspiration”

Principal: **Mr S Huntington**



September 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

Changes to Design Technology

After careful consideration, we have decided to change from a GCSE qualification in design technology to the Cambridge National Qualification in Engineering Design.

During the Pathways process we offered the traditional GCSE course in design technology. Since then, nationally, the content of this specification has changed across a range of examination boards. The traditional GCSE Design Technology course now places greater emphasis on developing students' research skills, rather than focussing on the creation and practical development of a well-made product. Such changes mean that the manufacture component now only accounts for a small portion of the final mark.

As a lead practitioner in this subject, I realise a major reason for students choosing to study design technology is to be creative and to develop their practical skills in the workshop. A number of schools in the Trust and in the local area have now opted to switch from the GCSE course to an equivalent qualification - the Cambridge National Qualification in Engineering Design. This qualification is split into four units which are equally weighted. This means that students achieve 75% of their overall grade through practical coursework elements and only 25% of the course is formally examined. The new course will actively prepare students who wish to study for an apprenticeship beyond Year 11, alongside those who wish to study such a course in the Sixth Form.

A further benefit of the Cambridge National Qualification in Engineering Design is that both the coursework and examination will be completed by January in Year 11, therefore taking the pressure off students during the summer examination cycle.

Thank you in anticipation of your support and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely

Gemma Kidd
Head of Design Technology

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